

**ISLAMIC RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN THE CONTEXT OF
SOCIAL STATUS AND MARITAL SECURITY AMONG
MARRIED AND DIVORCEE MATES OF ALLAHABAD,
UTTAR PRADESH**

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Abstract

A study has focused on social status and marital security of the Sunni Muslim women belonged from Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh through directly examined different factors especially in distinct five Marriage patterns including newly married couple, Long duration couple, Divorcee & first marriage and Divorcee & divorce marriage. Woman mainly considered in study is between 15 to 65 years of age for the sake of the percent study altogether a sample of 600 Muslim women respondents considered. An overview of available studies revealed the fact that majority of the research concentrated on the problems faced by the Muslim women and no such study based on marital life has been seen; so the present study was undertaken with a view to provide information to fill the existing gap. The position of women in the Muslim in sampled area is better. She attains a prime role in household work and has deep involvement in the ritual activities.

Keywords: Marital Adjustment, Sunni Muslim women, Women status, Social status

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1. Introduction:

There are many misconceptions surrounding women's rights in Islam. The purpose of this study is to shed some light on the basic rights of women in Islam in the context of marriage, divorce and their marital adjustment. This section of study is only to be viewed as a basic outline of women's rights in Islam regarding marriage and divorce. It is also important to understand that the religion of Islam and people's cultural traditions. Again the position of women in the society is better. She attains a prime role in household work and has deep involvement in the ritual activities.

The main objectives of the present study are as under: *To focus on the social and marital status of women and their comparative studying the factor of marital adjustment in sampled Sunni Muslim women of distinct marriage pattern.*

2. Methodology:

Study location - To make a detailed study about the marital status of Muslim women of Allahabad; field work was conducted in Kareli of Allahabad district. It is the single Muslim majority area in Allahabad city where Muslims constitute major percent of the total population.

Sampling Procedure – A multi-stage random sampling method was adopted for the study consisted of 600 Sunni Muslim women respondent 150 from each marriage pattern in the age between 15-65 years Research study can be undertaken on a sample belonging to Muslim women of different Marriage pattern; Newly married women, Married women of long duration, Divorcee and first marriage and Divorcee & divorce that may be replicated for more valuable information about their marital life; for the sake of the percent study altogether a sample of 600 Muslim women respondents considered from different household in which newly married women categorized up to marriage of 7 years only; first of all selection of household considered according to availability of divorced couple, then after all total collection of data more focus over newly married and long duration married couple household selected which are easily available; the total sample is selected equally i.e. 150 respondent from each sects. For understanding the current social scenario and thought of marital life among Muslim community more weight assigned to 150 unmarried Muslim girls also; equal importance is given to the each sects of these

groups from different 600 household to avoid selection of two or more selection of couple from one houses, so that the sample reflects the real picture of their marital status.

Table 1: Population covered by the study

| Marriage Pattern | Number of Households | Number of person | Size of Households | Percent |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Newly married women | 150 | 720 | 4.8 | 21.6 |
| Long duration married women | 150 | 975 | 6.5 | 29.2 |
| Divorcee and First marriage | 150 | 795 | 5.3 | 23.7 |
| Divorcee and Divorce | 150 | 855 | 5.7 | 25.5 |
| Total | 600 | 3345 | 5.5 | 100 |

Methods - The study uses primary and secondary data. The primary data for the study have been collected through survey conducted among women among of Kareli with a structured schedule. The secondary data are derived from books, Journals, reports and news papers. The data collected were suitably classified and analysed, keeping in view the objectives of the study.

Data Analysis - The date collected administering the pre-tested schedules, tabulated, and analyzed data was done through the computer application using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS 20).

3. Ethical consideration:

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Departments of Anthropology, for this study. The research was approved by the Ethics Committee of University of Delhi, Delhi - 07.

4. Result and Discussion:

Besides providing the analytical findings from the whole sample households in general, comparative analyses among distinct marriage pattern are done on the basis of sampled population household groups.

I. Muslim Women Status: It was felt that the investigation would be incomplete without the inclusion of Muslim women. A clear picture emerges across the Muslim society when talking about the status of women, as well as their social achievements. The status of women constitutes a problem in almost all societies and is a matter of worldwide; women of sampled area are more linked to their religious culture in terms of their language, life style, daily routine, food pattern; religious practices make them more distinct from any other community. There are many misconceptions surrounding women's rights in Islam. The purpose of this study is to shed some light on the basic rights of women in Islam in the context of marriage, divorce and their marital adjustment. This section of study is only to be viewed as a basic outline of women's rights in Islam regarding marriage and divorce. It is also important to understand that the religion of Islam and people's cultural traditions.

II. Rate of Gender in Society: Generally the 14.5 percent women were unaware of the social status and their knowledge about the wider social world was through the conversations of men only, which they overhear, for men rarely discussed these matters with women. Several times, women were not allowed in the assemblies. Usually the name of young children, both boys and girls were presented to the father through mother; they never directly address their husband. This situation was found most of the families, as revealed from the interviews with people of the community. 52.8 percent believes that they live in dominancy of their spouse most of their decision is taken by them; on other hand from the above discussion it may be argued that the question of gender discrimination has socio-economic cultural and political significance; so 15.8 percent of respondent believe there is no any gender discrimination among them.

Table 2: Rate of gender in society

| Marriage pattern | What do you think about rate of gender in Muslim society? | | | | | | | | Total | |
|------------------|---|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------------|---|------------|---|-------|---|
| | Women empowerment | | Male dominant society | | No gender discrimination | | Don't know | | | |
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|------|-----|------|----|------|----|------|-----|-----|
| Newly married women | 27 | 18 | 69 | 46 | 32 | 21.3 | 22 | 14.7 | 150 | 100 |
| Long duration married women | 16 | 10.7 | 80 | 53.4 | 25 | 16.6 | 29 | 19.3 | 150 | 100 |
| Divorcee and First marriage | 35 | 23.3 | 76 | 50.7 | 18 | 12 | 21 | 14 | 150 | 100 |
| Divorcee and Divorce | 23 | 15.4 | 92 | 61.3 | 20 | 13.3 | 15 | 10 | 150 | 100 |
| Total | 101 | 16.9 | 317 | 52.8 | 95 | 15.8 | 87 | 14.5 | 600 | 100 |

16.9 percent women believe empowerment in real sense will make a society where power sharing is almost equal. Empowerment requires a distinct role for women in the formulation and influencing decision making process by integrating them into the system.

Table 3: General problems of women in Muslim society

| Marriage pattern | What do you think about general problem of women in Muslim society? | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | |
|-----------------------------|---|------|-----------|------|-------------------|------|--------------|------|-------|------|------------|-----|-------|-----|
| | Health problems | | Education | | Domestic Violence | | Unemployment | | Other | | Don't know | | | |
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| Newly married women | 53 | 35.3 | 32 | 21.4 | 14 | 9.3 | 29 | 19.4 | 18 | 12 | 4 | 2.6 | 150 | 100 |
| Long duration married women | 25 | 16.7 | 45 | 30 | 22 | 14.7 | 38 | 25.3 | 11 | 7.3 | 9 | 6 | 150 | 100 |
| Divorcee and First marriage | 49 | 32.6 | 27 | 18 | 35 | 23.4 | 20 | 13.3 | 4 | 2.7 | 15 | 10 | 150 | 100 |
| Divorcee | 34 | 22.7 | 48 | 32 | 14 | 9.3 | 31 | 20.6 | 17 | 11.4 | 6 | 4 | 150 | 100 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----|------|-----|------|----|------|-----|------|----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| and Divorce | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 161 | 26.9 | 152 | 25.4 | 85 | 14.1 | 118 | 19.6 | 50 | 8.3 | 34 | 5.7 | 600 | 100 |

III. Decision Making: The studies shows woman has no power to giving decision on any domestic problem which is all decided by the male member only. Its shows in religious sphere the Muslim woman are quite backward and in political sphere the status of woman is very low. It may be due to the illiteracy, they have lack of interest and lack of time in political and religious environment; the decision making power always goes to the men. Muslim women are involved more in domestic work than the men. Women can inherit any property. It denotes that women are important in their socio-cultural activities but in socio-political or religious sphere they are still dominated by the men. But empowerment in real sense will make a society where power sharing is almost equal. The status of woman is analyses the participation of women in the decision making process of family matters, health matters, the level of freedom of movement and social positioning in the family and community.

IV. Makes Decision in the Family Matters: The women as the respondents have the opinion that they do not have the freedom to take decisions in the family related matters. The decisions are taken by the collectively generally all male and female make decision in the family matters is about 33.2% whereas in case of individual male 40.1 percent; in Muslim role of relatives are also dominate in compare to other society i.e. 15.7% and 11% in case of individually female who making decision that show little effort to make decision in family matters.

Table 4: Decision making in Households

| Marriage pattern | Who will take decision in family matters? | | | | | | | | Total | |
|---------------------|---|------|----------------------|------|------------------------|----|-----------|------|-------|-----|
| | Collective (All male and Female) | | Individually male | | Individually female | | Relatives | | | |
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| Newly married women | 56 | 37.3 | 47 | 31.4 | 18 | 12 | 29 | 19.3 | 150 | 100 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|------|-----|------|----|------|----|------|-----|-----|
| Long duration married women | 61 | 40.6 | 53 | 35.3 | 22 | 14.7 | 14 | 9.4 | 150 | 100 |
| Divorcee and First marriage | 43 | 28.7 | 65 | 43.3 | 10 | 6.6 | 32 | 21.4 | 150 | 100 |
| Divorcee and Divorcee | 39 | 26 | 76 | 50.7 | 16 | 10.6 | 19 | 12.7 | 150 | 100 |
| Total | 199 | 33.2 | 241 | 40.1 | 66 | 11 | 94 | 15.7 | 600 | 100 |

The woman as the respondent does not have the freedom to take decisions in the family matters. The decisions are taken either by the husband as the head of the house hold or jointly. There are only few percent women who make decisions in the family. The influences of in laws are very minimal. The decisions in the economic matters are taken predominantly by their husbands and jointly, it is found hardly women take decisions in economic matters. The other members in the family influence the economic decisions of the household. This analysis reveals the fact that households are male and husband dominated ones where women are very submissive.

V. Muslim women seeking permission to go out for various purposes in sampled area:

Women's rights in sampled area are defined by family member generally and interpretation of Sunni Islam. In some family it is found that the woman prohibits going outside without decision of husband or family member. Women were previously forbidden from several activities but now days they free and will be able to take decision on number of matters.

Table 5: Muslim women seeking permission to go out for various purposes

| Do you need permission to go to market/Relative/Friend | Marriage patterns | | | | | | | | Total | |
|--|---------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|-----------------------|----|-------|------|
| | Newly married women | | Long duration married women | | Divorcee and First marriage | | Divorcee and Divorcee | | | |
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| Always | 73 | 48.7 | 36 | 24 | 49 | 32.6 | 45 | 30 | 203 | 33.9 |
| Sometimes | 48 | 32 | 53 | 35.4 | 65 | 43.4 | 78 | 52 | 244 | 40.6 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Never | 29 | 19.3 | 61 | 40.6 | 36 | 24 | 27 | 18 | 153 | 25.5 |
| Total | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 600 | 100 |

33.9 percent women always need permission to go out whereas 25.5 percent women respondent doesn't need a permission to go outside.

Table 6: Distinct question regarding Muslim women status among sampled population of Kareli, Allahabad

| | | Marriage patterns | | | | | | | | Total | |
|---|-------|---------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|----------------------|------|-------|------|
| | | Newly married Women | | Long duration married women | | Divorcee and First marriage | | Divorcee and Divorce | | | |
| | | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | | |
| There is some gap between male and female in terms of social status? | Yes | 59 | 39.3 | 83 | 55.4 | 124 | 82.6 | 104 | 69.3 | 373 | 62.1 |
| | No | 91 | 60.7 | 67 | 44.6 | 26 | 17.4 | 46 | 30.7 | 227 | 37.9 |
| | Total | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 600 | 100 |
| Do you believe that women are inferior to men? | Yes | 7 | 4.7 | 22 | 14.6 | 16 | 10.6 | 10 | 6.7 | 55 | 9.2 |
| | No | 143 | 95.3 | 128 | 85.4 | 134 | 89.3 | 140 | 93.3 | 545 | 90.8 |
| | Total | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 600 | 100 |
| Women sacrifice her comforts and pleasure in order to look after her family members | Yes | 104 | 69.4 | 133 | 88.7 | 119 | 79.4 | 112 | 74.7 | 468 | 78 |
| | No | 46 | 30.6 | 17 | 11.3 | 31 | 20.6 | 38 | 25.3 | 132 | 22 |
| | Total | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 600 | 100 |
| Do you believe female get equal rights or independence as males | Yes | 5 | 3.4 | 34 | 22.7 | 12 | 8 | 23 | 15.3 | 74 | 12.4 |
| | No | 145 | 96.6 | 116 | 77.3 | 138 | 92 | 127 | 84.7 | 526 | 87.6 |
| | Total | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 600 | 100 |
| Spouse wants that Muslim wives should wear Purdah? | Yes | 136 | 90.6 | 102 | 68 | 85 | 56.6 | 93 | 62 | 416 | 69.3 |
| | No | 14 | 9.3 | 48 | 32 | 65 | 43.7 | 57 | 38 | 184 | 30.7 |
| | Total | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 600 | 100 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|
| In your family history a divorcee cases comes in light? | Yes | 29 | 19.3 | 43 | 28.6 | 56 | 37.4 | 32 | 21.3 | 160 | 26.6 |
| | No | 121 | 80.7 | 107 | 71.4 | 94 | 62.6 | 118 | 78.7 | 440 | 73.4 |
| | Total | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 600 | 100 |
| After marriage had you a got bride price? | Yes | 122 | 81.4 | 141 | 94 | 134 | 89.3 | 118 | 78.6 | 515 | 85.8 |
| | No | 28 | 18.6 | 9 | 6 | 16 | 10.7 | 32 | 21.4 | 85 | 14.2 |
| | Total | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 150 | 100 | 600 | 100 |

VI. Gender Inequality: Understanding the position of women in society, and their relationship with their spouse is essential for promoting overall development of her. In many cases, women and girls assume greater responsibilities to manage their houses, but have subordinate positions in decision making; women need to be at the centre to avoid stereotyping these roles, and to base responses on the complexities of local realities. 62.1 percent women feel that there are lot of gap between male and female whereas 37.9 percent women are think that it is only assumption; Social relations refer to positive characteristics that define interactions among individuals, such as social cohesion, reciprocity, mutual respect, good gender and family relations, and the ability to help others and provide for children.

VII. Inferiority of Women in Muslim Community: In spite of all 90.8 percent respondent believe women are not inferior to the men; whereas the 9.2 percent women whose condition was poor remained were not able to think beyond their domestic violence. Several girls are getting married at a very tender age. However, they had got a higher status religiously; it's said that, women enjoyed equivalent status & rights like their males counterparts. There were many women who worked for the uplift & betterment of their female counterparts; freedom & right such as freedom of expression & equality as well as the right to be educated. Various prestigious positions at this period were held by women. However, some problems such as dowry, domestic violence, sex selective abortion, female infanticide are still prevalent.

VIII. Sacrifice Comforts and Pleasure to look Family Members: Muslim women play important role in their family members among everyone's life; 78% women think that they sacrifices their comforts and pleasure towards family without complaining; through her tiny appearance lays an extraordinary fortitude, perseverance, a altruistic soul and a very kindly heart.

There are different forms of families found in sampled area including nuclear families, extended families, single parent families and Joint families; where the women generally stay at home to take care of domestic tasks; means a female's role in the family is much more higher; on other hand 22% female not feel so; and worked for the uplift & betterment of their life without lost their individuality.

IX. Practice Purdah in Muslim Community: Purdah in its many variations is still used by 69.3 percent Muslim women of sampled area, although the Burqa is almost always exclusively associated with Muslim women of in most parts of Kareli; though it was originally a Muslim rule that was adopted by them. They believe that Purdah system amongst women elevate their social position. So really, it is a fact that women follow such custom. Evidently this is a very meaning custom for women, it is custom that women want other women to follow; to do Purdah in front of older men of the household as a sign of respect or to keep women separate from men or strangers. This is a custom perpetrated on women by other women and the cycle continues.

Table 7: Purdah practiced

| Marriage pattern | When you used Purdah | | | | | | | | Total | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|------------------------|------|---|------|-------|-----|
| | While going out | | In front of elder relatives | | In front of neighbours | | In marriages or other social ceremonies | | | |
| | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| Newly married women | 72 | 48 | 37 | 24.7 | 25 | 16.6 | 16 | 10.7 | 150 | 100 |
| Long duration married women | 56 | 37.3 | 49 | 32.7 | 13 | 8.6 | 32 | 21.4 | 150 | 100 |
| Divorcee and First marriage | 68 | 45.4 | 26 | 17.3 | 34 | 22.7 | 22 | 14.6 | 150 | 100 |
| Divorcee and Divorce | 46 | 30.7 | 58 | 38.6 | 10 | 6.7 | 36 | 24 | 150 | 100 |
| Total | 242 | 40.3 | 170 | 28.4 | 82 | 13.6 | 106 | 17.7 | 600 | 100 |

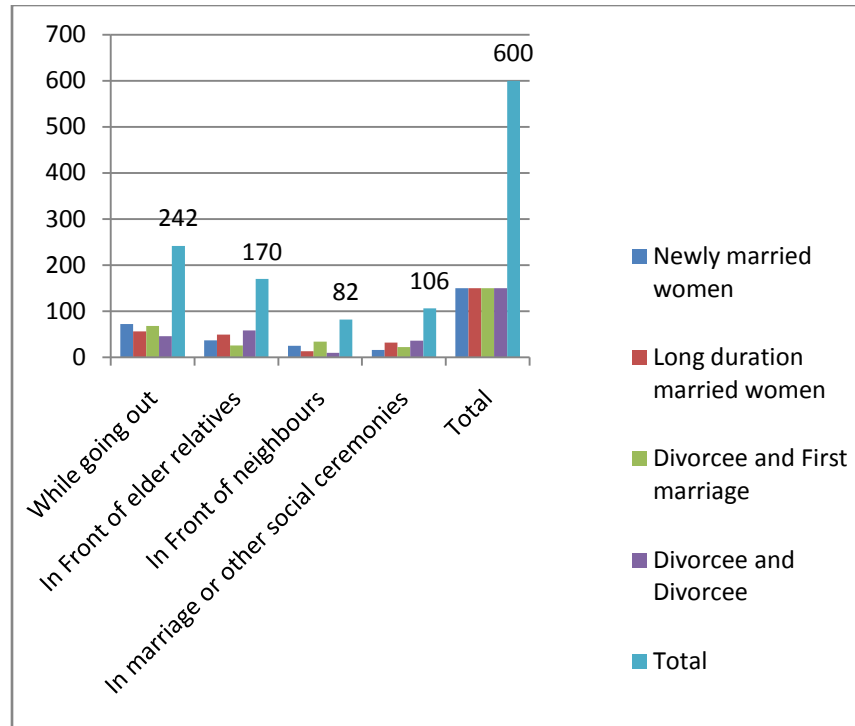


Figure 1: Purdah practiced

4. Discussion:

The analysis of status of the women distinct variables considered in the study that are decision making power in the family, society, giving advice to friends and relatives, freedom in mobility and their access to information and communication. However, they have similarities in the degree of involvement in social and political activities; their responsibilities for caring tend to make them the focal point of a family unit and often the community as well, carrying out childcare, elder care and community based voluntary activities. Women often neglect their own health because they prioritize their commitment to others. The studies have shown that women of sampled area, who are left behind by their husband in search of job in foreign countries mostly Gulf countries, suffer from a series of social and psychological problems induced by separation. Researches and surveys have shown that women in the migrant households have an uphill task and face tensions, pressures, conflicts and anxieties.

For sustained economic development and social justice, socioeconomic status of women should be improved along with that of men. Socioeconomic freedom gives the women the right to determine the course of their lives; enhances the women's social standing. The domestic activity is dependent on several complex economic, social and psychological factors. Thus, for any

attempt made to understand the daily activity among women, an analysis of their socio-economic origins is necessary.

5. Summary and Findings:

From the above analysis, we can conclude that the patriarchal ideology that prioritizes marriage and domesticity for women, low level of work participation, and limited autonomy in decision-making and early child bearing are the constraints that Muslim women experience.

Long duration married women- Long duration married women call their husbands by their children names which are regarded normal in the sampled area. They do not have to depend on their husbands for day-today affairs. Most of them have a sound financial background. They utilize the opportunities given to them and take good care of their personal selves like being well dressed, applying make-up to enhance their beauty and many others. Long duration women demand privacy and enjoy private lives. They are economically secure. Due to the high economic security the women enjoy, they are found to be less dependent on others. Long duration married women have the happiness of being with their children during their formative periods. They have the ability to do domestic chores, freedom to do other personal things and relax.

Divorce and first married women- In the case of stress, the wives in Divorce and first marriage women respondent were found to experience the highest stress when compared with other Marriage pattern. Role ambiguity, huge family responsibilities, lack of communication with the husbands, to name a few, could be the reasons for high stress in wives in sampled area. In most of the houses, wives are expected to live with the husbands' families. The husbands earn the money but wives do not have the freedom to utilize the money. In addition they have the responsibility of leading the family, fulfilling the requirements of their in-laws and children. The decision making is not done by the wives. Though they rear the children, they have to consult others for taking important decisions regarding children. Their opinions are not valued most of the time. Another problem faced by the wives is the social isolation and loneliness they feel in the absence of their husbands. The relatives may not be willing to visit their houses for fear of being asked for help. Even if they do pay visits, the wives may not feel free to discuss personal

and emotional problems with them. It is also not possible for them to discuss their problems with husbands over phone. Although communication facilities have increased, most of the husbands; the wives cannot expose their emotional feelings to their kith and kin and hence such feelings are suppressed. Even if they try to express the feelings, the husbands might not be able to accept. Naturally these wives get into a stressed state of mind and there are times when these wives end up with psychological problems such as depression and psychosomatic disorders. All the reasons mentioned above in relation to stress gives a clear explanation of the high stress experienced by the wives.

Divorcee and Divorce- Studies found that divorced couple exhibit substantially higher marital adjustment than individuals in divorcee and first marriage marriages. They are also more likely to suffer from anxiety; In addition, women participants in our study were found to have more depressed compared to men; they believe that their husband involve some post marital affair, and he is not interested in her. This was similar to the several Muslim women who again divorce-seeking and reported to live alone without interference of any one in their life; very few of male respondents are able to discuss about this sensitive topic and status of women.

6. Conclusion and future enhancement:

On the basis of the findings and conclusions of the study the researcher has suggested that still lots of further research should be yet too studied by younger generation into various aspects of the social and marital security measures for the women in the State. The position of women in the Muslim society is better. She attains a prime role in household work and has deep involvement in the ritual activities.

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